



The Board of Park and Recreation Commissioners of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, met at the Administrative Office Building, located at 5841 Brookshire Blvd., Charlotte, NC 28216 on March 14, 2017 at 6 p.m.

PRC MINUTES March 14, 2017

ATTENDANCE

PRC Present:

Elaine Powell, Chair
 Kendel Bryant, Vice Chair
 Tristan McMannis, Executive Secretary
 Sterling Martin
 Aubin Guinness
 Ed Barnhart
 Heidi Pruess
 Peter Engels
 Doug Burnett
 Brian Cox
 Jim Garges, Director of Park and Recreation

PRC Absent:

Vacant – South 3 (Tonya Phifer)
Vacant – Central 3 (Abe Early)
 Mary Johnson

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. by Chair Elaine Powell, which was followed by the pledge of allegiance.

Welcome and Introductions:

Each Commissioner introduced themselves and the park region they represent.

Proclamations, Awards and Recognitions

AT&T Fiber Donation to Youth Sports Programs:

Karla Thornhill, Youth Sports Manager, came before the PRC to recognize an in-kind donation from AT&T Fiber of 2,500 sports balls (\$15,000 value) for the Department's Youth Sports Leagues. This donation will allow youth to own a ball of their sport so that they can work on their skills outside of organized practice. **Carlos Sanchez** and **Joseph Giaramo** of AT&T Fiber were present for the recognition.

Luther Williams Retirement

Chris Hunter, North Region Park Manager, came before the PRC to recognize the retirement of Park Ranger Luther Williams. Mr. Williams retired with 11 years' service and was presented with the North Star Award.

Public Appearance:

Scott Higgins, Town of Cornelius Park, Art, Recreation

Mr. Higgins, Chair of the Park, Art, Recreation, and Culture Commission for the Town of Cornelius, came before the PRC to on behalf of the Northern Towns approval for the funding for the design of the North Regional Recreation Center beginning July 2017 (FY18). Mr. Higgins pointed out that the North Region does not have a public recreation center under one roof to meet the needs of children, families, fixed income residents and senior citizens. This regional recreation center has had the approval of the North region since 2008.

Richard Shaw

Mr. Shaw came before the PRC in opposition of the Linda Lake Neighborhood Park and to share the results of his community survey.

Proclamations and Awards: None

Presentations:

Reinvention of the Nature Museum

Catherine Horne of the Nature Museum made a presentation of the plans to rebuild and repurpose the Nature Museum to better meet the needs of the community, improve the service, provide education, create a front yard and tree canopy. The reconstruction would:

- Increase the sf of the facility from 13,000 to 29,000
- Activate the full campus
- Integrate with the Park and Greenway
- Expand to serve visitor of all ages
- Serve 160,000 regional visitors

Funding would be partially provided by the County and partially by fund raising efforts of the Nature Museum with the anticipation of beginning the project in 2022. This presentation can be viewed here: [Reinvention of the Nature Museum](#).

Renaming Request – Crossridge Neighborhood Park

Kevin Brickman, Park Planner, came before the PRC to request their endorsement of an application to rename the Crossridge Neighborhood Park, which is currently under construction, to Forest Pawtucket Neighborhood Park. This application has been submitted by Katherine Sue Taylor and residents of the Crossridge Neighborhood. The basis for the name change is to better represent the entire neighborhood rather than one street in the neighborhood. The North Advisory Council has endorsed this naming request. The application can be viewed here: [Renaming Request – Crossridge Neighborhood Park](#)

Motion was made by Commissioner Pruess to endorse the renaming of the Crossridge Neighborhood Park to Forest Pawtucket Neighborhood Park, which was seconded by Commissioner Burnett and approved unanimously.

Naming Request – Hornet’s Nest Indoor Shelter

Chris Hunter, North Park Region Manager, came before the PRC to request their endorsement of an application to name the new indoor shelter at Hornet’s Nest Park the *David Williamson, Jr. Pavilion at Hornet’s Nest Park*. This application is being submitted by Commissioner George Dunlap and the Beatties Ford Trinity Park Association. Mr. Williamson has been very active in the Beatties Ford Road/Trinity Park community, served on the Park and Recreation Commission as well as the Northwest District Advisory Council and is one of the 7 surviving members of the “Friendship 9”, a group that refused to leave McCrory’s Five and Dime after being denied service. The application can be viewed here: [Naming of Hornet’s Nest Indoor Shelter](#).

Motion was made by Commissioner Bryant to endorse the naming of the new indoor shelter at Hornet’s Nest Park the *David Williamson, Jr. Pavilion at Hornet’s Nest Park*, which was seconded by Commissioner Cox and approved unanimously.

Naming Request – Midwood Park Entrance

Michael Campbell, Central Park Region Manager, came before the PRC to request their endorsement of an application to name the Mecklenburg Avenue pedestrian entrance of Midwood Park the *Jerry L. Brown Midwood Park Memorial Entrance and Walkway*. This application is being submitted by Commissioner Ridenhour and the friends and family of Mr. Brown. Mr. Brown, affectionately known as the “Mayor of Mecklenburg Avenue”, lived directly across from the pedestrian park entrance. His drive and determination to ensure his neighbors were safe was key to many changes and improvements to Midwood Park over the years, including the Mecklenburg Avenue Entrance. The application can be viewed here: [Naming of Midwood Park Entrance](#).

Motion was made by Commissioner Cox to endorse the naming of the Mecklenburg Avenue pedestrian entrance of Midwood Park the *Jerry L. Brown Midwood Park Memorial Entrance and Walkway*, which was seconded by Commissioner Engels and approved unanimously.

Advisory Council Appointments/Reappointments:

Central:

Motion was made by Commissioner Engels to appoint **Suzette McHugh** to a full term on the Central Advisory Council, expiring 6/2020, which was seconded by Commissioner Bryant and approved unanimously.

Golf:

Motion was made by Commissioner Cox to appoint **Robert Horsley** to a full term on the Golf Advisory Council, expiring 6/2020, which was seconded by Commissioner Martin and approved unanimously.

North:

Motion was made by Commissioner Bryant to appoint **Adam Pasiak** to an unexpired term on the North Advisory Council, expiring 6/2018, which was seconded by Commissioner Powell and approved unanimously.

South:

Motion was made by Commissioner Barnhart to appoint **George Dornblazer** and **Alana-Nicole Dery** each to a full term on the South Advisory Council, expiring 6/2020 which was seconded by Commissioner Burnett and approved unanimously.

Sr. Citizen:

Motion was made by Commissioner McMannis to appoint **Shirley Guyton-Simpson** to a full term on the Sr. Citizen Advisory Council, expiring 6/2020 which was seconded by Commissioner Pruess and approved unanimously.

Director's Report:

Director Garges reported on the following:

CIP and Remaining 2008 Bond Projects: Director Garges discussed the remaining FY18 CIP projects and the CIP for FY19 – FY23 as well as the remaining 2008 bond projects. The following information resulted:

- Director Garges shared information from a CIP presentation. This presentation can be viewed here: [P&R – CIP Cash Flow](#)
- The Citizens Capital Budget Advisory Committee (CCBAC) is going to be revived with a new focus, not yet determined by the BOCC.
- The remaining 2008 bond projects are ranked as the highest priority projects for funding by the Department and are listed on the FY19 – 23 CIP Cash Flow. View the remaining 2008 bond projects here: [2008 Remaining Bond Projects](#)
- The CIP Cash Flow for FY19 – 23 shows three special projects under Park and Recreation: Land Acquisition (\$33 million), FY18; Discovery Place Nature Museum (\$17.5 million); Memorial Stadium (\$97,450 million).
- The Pearle Street Park project shows up on the CIP Cash Flow in FY2019 but will start in 2018 if the land transactions occur on schedule.
- The Department prioritized \$150 million in projects over FY19-23, including the 2008 bond projects, greenway projects and the Northern Regional Recreation Center (NRRC). The Eastway Regional Recreation Center (ERRC) will overlap with the NRRC in the FY19-23 CIP.
- With two \$40 million dollar projects included in the \$150 million P&R allocation for the FY19-23 CIP (ERRC and the NRRC) some projects may start in FY19-23 but finish later.
- Land Acquisition: The County has been allocating \$6.5 million annually off the top of the capital improvement program for land acquisition in addition to the \$150 million, however, there have been conversations about taking the \$6.5 million for land acquisition out of the Department's allotted \$150 million. This would result in fewer projects, less land or both; a serious impact to the Department's CIP. Currently, there is about \$2 million left in FY17 for

land acquisition with \$1 million set aside for greenway acquisition. It is important that the PRC advocate for land acquisition money that does not come out of the Park and Recreation CIP funds.

- Land Acquisition: These funds fall on the P&R CIP but the funding could be used to purchase land other than park land. Typically, all the allocated land acquisition money would go to purchase park land, but on occasion, the County will need to use part of those funds to purchase land for County projects, such as the Community Resource Centers.
- The BOCC must balance the capital cost and operating cost across the County and stay within the debt policy.
- The hope is that the funding for special projects listed on the P&R CIP for FY19-23 (Memorial Stadium, Land Acquisition and the Nature Museum) will be added funding to the Department's \$150 million.
- The operating budget for Park and Recreation includes the ONA (operational needs assessment) and items from the strategic plan. That number will go to the BOCC as the ask. The priority is to receiving operating funds for the opening of new facilities. Each Department will make a presentation to the County Manager and the Executive Team and a recommended budget will go forward to the BOCC, sometime in April.

Motion was made by Commissioner Cox for the Park and Recreation Commission to submit the following to the Board of County Commissioners for its consideration:

- In the CIP Cash Flow for FY 2019, remove the "special" line item of \$71,250,000 for Memorial Stadium. This amount reflects a proposed payment to the professional MLS Soccer entity, and is not a public Park and Recreation project.
- In the CIP Cash Flow for FY 2020, remove the "special" line item of \$47,500,000 for Memorial Stadium. This amount reflects a proposed payment to the professional MLS Soccer entity, and is not a public Park and Recreation project.
- In subsequent CIP Cash Flow for 2021 and beyond, remove the "special" line item for Memorial Stadium that that reflects the repayment of the apparent loan to the professional MLS Soccer entity.
- Advance the CIP funding for the Northern Towns Regional Recreation Center currently allocated in FY 2020 (\$6, 532,500), FY 2021 (\$19,890,000), and 2022 (12,090,000) to FY 2019, FY 2020 and FY 2021 respectively.
- Ask the Commission to instruct the PRC to solicit input on the CIP/CAN via its regional and other advisory councils in accordance with the PRC Charter, Article III, Section 17 and following best practices for commissions and advisory councils.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Burnett and discussion followed.

Commissioner Barnhart made an amended motion to separate Commissioner's Cox's motion into three motions: Memorial Stadium, Northern Regional Recreation Center and CIP Advisory Council Input.

Commissioners Burnett seconded the amended motion.

Discussion followed.

Commissioner Cox withdrew his original motion and made the following two motions:

1st: **Motion was made** by Commissioner Cox for the Park and Recreation Commission to submit the following to the Board of County Commissioners for its consideration:

- In the CIP Cash Flow for FY 2019, remove the “special” line item of \$71,250,000 for Memorial Stadium. This amount reflects a proposed payment to the professional MLS Soccer entity, and is not a public Park and Recreation project.
- In the CIP Cash Flow for FY 2020, remove the “special” line item of \$47,500,000 for Memorial Stadium. This amount reflects a proposed payment to the professional MLS Soccer entity, and is not a public Park and Recreation project.
- In subsequent CIP Cash Flow for 2021 and beyond, remove the “special” line item for Memorial Stadium that reflects the repayment of the apparent loan to the professional MLS Soccer entity.

2nd: **Motion was made** by Commissioner Cox for the Park and Recreation Commission to submit the following to the Board of County Commissioners for its consideration.

- Advance the CIP funding for the Northern Towns Regional Recreation Center currently allocated in FY 2020 (\$6, 532,500), FY 2021 (\$19,890,000), and 2022 (12,090,000) to FY 2019, FY 2020 and FY 2021 respectively.

The motions were seconded by Commissioner Pruess and approved unanimously.

The Board agreed to draft a letter of resolution regarding the above to the Board of County Commissioners.

PRC Chair Report:

The PRC reviewed the draft action plan for PRC priorities which can be viewed here: [PRC Priorities](#). Following discussion, it was decided that the plan would be placed into a more traditional format. The PRC agreed to work on the plan and bring it back to the next PRC meeting.

Motion was made by Commissioner Pruess to revise the format of the PRC agenda to include the PRC priority items of adequate funding, land preservation and active community engagement as standard agenda items with information provided by Advisory Councils and staff on each priority as appropriate; and for the current “Advisory Council Reports” agenda item to be included in the new PRC priority agenda item; and to establish suggested times on each agenda item, which was seconded by Commissioner McMannis and approved unanimously.

Commissioner Cox reminded the board that the Park and Recreation Commission’s charter requires that a nominating committee be appointed each year to bring forward a slate of nominations for PRC officers in June.

Chair Powell shared the updated PRC advisory council and committee assignments. Everyone was asked to review the assignments for accuracy.

Consent Items

Commissioner Cox pulled all Capital Reserve Expenditure Request to address a concern from the Aquatics Advisory Council. The Aquatics Advisory Council discussed and adopted a motion urging

the Park and Recreation Commission to take the position of supporting Capital Reserve Accounts. This concern comes because of conversations that the Capital Reserve Accounts may be eliminated.

Motion was made by Commissioner Engels to approve all consent items, including the PRC minutes of January 10, 2017 which was seconded by Commissioner Barnhart and approved unanimously.

Park Commissioners Reports:

The Commissioners reported individually:

Commissioner Martin reported that Larry McAfee attended the last Athletics Advisory Council meeting and brought a suggested plan for renovations to Renaissance Park to develop a championship cross country course. He also reported that the Fisher Farm Greenway is underway.

Commissioner Engels reported that the Central Advisory Council is considering scheduling their meetings at different locations throughout the park system.

Commissioner Guinness reported that he continues to visit parks and noted that Mecklenburg County Parks continue to show up well and stand out as being among the best parks in the Southeast.

Commissioner Cox commended on the excellent 1st public meeting for the Eastway Regional Recreation Center.

Commissioner Bryant reminded the Board of the list of upcoming events and the need for PRC participation.

Commissioner McMannis invited everyone to join the Sr. Citizen Advisory Council at Nevin Park on May 9 for a Sr. Games volunteer project. The project begins at 9 a.m.

Commissioner Barnhart reported the following:

- Attended the Plaque Dedication at Col. Francis Beatty Park
- May 3 at 4:15 is the ribbon cutting for the Cordelia Park Greenway and kick-off for the Greenways for Mecklenburg Foundation.

Commissioner Pruess reported the following:

- Larry McAfee will be recognized on the Sports Wall of Fame on May 18 at the Dr. Charles L. Sifford Golf Course. Time is 5 – 7.
- Partners for Parks recently had their Strategic Planning meeting. Their priorities, mission and focus are very like those of the Park and Recreation Commission:
 - Preservation and enhancement of outdoor spaces through funding
 - Collaborate with like-minded organizations
 - Advocacy
 - Building community

Adjournment The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.